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METROPOLITAN TORONTO
INTERIM HOUSING COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT JUNE 1961



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M.V. Jones, Chairman,
Commissioner of Planning.

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Commissioner of Welfare and Housing.

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METROPOLITAN TORONTO INTERIM HOUSING COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT
JUNE 1961

In accordance with the instructions issued by the Council of the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, this report is submitted by the Interim Housing Committee for the year ending May 31, 1961. This report deals with the Metropolitan Toronto housing programme, and reports on education, transportation and social welfare costs.

1. PROGRESS REPORT ON METROPOLITAN HOUSING ACTIVITIES

The Metropolitan Corporation has concerned itself with the provision of low-rental housing since 1955, when negotiations were begun for the establishment of the Lawrence Heights project, in North York. The Metropolitan Council adopted a report in March, 1958, establishing a housing programme for the Metropolitan area. In May 1958, the Metropolitan Corporation requested the Federal and Provincial Governments to establish an immediate programme of 1,000 low-rental family housing units and appointed The Interim Housing Committee, consisting of the Commissioner of Planning, the Commissioner of Welfare and Housing, and the Chairman of The Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority, to implement the Corporation's housing policy. The short-term programme contemplated the provision of 1,000 units of family housing and 500 units of elderly persons' housing annually over a period of five or six years.

Since this programme was announced only 38 units have been commenced as an addition to Lawrence Heights. On May 8, 1961, Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation called tenders for approximately 150 units to be located on Scarlett Road in the Township of Etobicoke. The programme for elderly persons' housing has been much more successful with 986 units having been produced since the 1958 programme was announced. The Interim Housing Committee believes that the low rental family housing programme has been unsuccessful for the following reasons:

1. Complicated administrative techniques involved in Federal-Provincial rental housing projects.

This was reported in detail in our annual report of 1960.

Although recommendations were made by the Metropolitan Corporation, neither the Provincial Government, nor the Federal Government, have commented on these recommendations. The present technique is cumbersome involving many government departments. A new and simpler approach would result in greater efficiency and in lower costs of construction.

2. Lack of a coordinated Metropolitan urban renewal and public housing programme.

There is no overall Metropolitan urban renewal programme.

The Metropolitan Corporation did make overtures to the City of Toronto in 1960, with a view to a coordinated public housing programme involving the consolidation of the two Housing Authorities. The present project-by-project approach to public housing is inadequate and expensive.

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There does not appear to be a desire on the part of the City of Toronto for a consolidated Metropolitan public housing programme. This lack of Metropolitan coordination makes it more difficult for the Province of Ontario and the Federal Government to develop and implement an adequate public housing programme.

3. Reluctance on the part of suburban municipalities to accept public housing projects.

Suburban municipalities fear hidden costs such as education and social welfare. Projects of this kind attract large families and the demands on school plants increase. Moreover, there is a larger ratio of welfare recipients among families eligible for public housing.

Status of Proposals

Family Housing

The following is a summary of the current status of the various projects:-

a. Scarlett Road, Etobicoke: 155 units

On May 8th, 1961, the Federal-Provincial Partnership called tenders for the construction of 155 units, with the tenders to close on the 1st June. Satisfactory prices have been received and it is possible that a start will be made in June 1961, with completion expected in the early part of 1962.

b. Warden Avenue, Scarborough: 324 units

The draft 4-way agreement and the site plan were submitted to the Metropolitan Corporation on

May 10th, 1961. The Scarborough Planning Board indicated that they would withhold site plan approval until satisfactory arrangements had been made to relieve the Municipality of the additional financial burden in respect of local education costs. A special report on local education costs, arising from low-rent housing projects, was submitted to the Housing and Welfare Committee on May 17th, 1961. If the matter of education costs can be resolved it is estimated that a construction start can be made late in 1961, with completion late in 1962.

- c. Lawrence Heights Extension, North York: 38 units
Construction has commenced on the 38 units which will complete the Lawrence Heights project in North York. A start was made in April, 1961, and it is expected that these units will be completed by the fall of 1961.
- d. O'Connor Drive, North York: 300 units
Expropriation was approved by the Metropolitan Council and negotiations for the properties in question are now taking place between the Metropolitan Toronto Property Department and the owners. It is expected that a sketch plan will be ready in June, 1961. The 4-way draft agreement has not yet been received and, on receipt of these two documents, a meeting will be held with

the Municipality of North York in connection with this proposal. Amendment to the Township zoning by-law and official plan is required but application will not be made until a sketch plan is received from the Federal-Provincial Partnership. As reported last year, no construction date has been set but the Federal Minister of Public Works has indicated that he will review the status of this project when all the facts are known.

e. Thistletown, Etobicoke: 1,200 to 1,500 units
(estimate)

The Federal-Provincial Partnership has engaged Murray & Fleiss, Architects, to prepare a preliminary plan for the Federal-Provincial holdings, (500 acres). Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation has indicated that the model and preliminary plans will not be ready until November 1st, 1961. The Township of Etobicoke is unable to proceed with the amendment to the zoning by-law, until such time as site plans are completed. Preliminary approval has been given for 500 rental housing units but, in light of the status of the preliminary plans, it is doubtful whether a start can be made until at least the summer of 1962.

f. Stableford Farm, Scarborough: 95 units (estimate)

The draft subdivision plan for the first stage has been approved. The Township of Scarborough

is opposed to any public housing rental units being constructed on this site. It will be recalled that the Township has proposed that the subdivision be restricted to conventional home ownership. The Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board recommended against this as a condition of approval and this condition was deleted by the Ontario Minister of Municipal Affairs in draft approval. In 1960 the Metropolitan Council approved the establishment of rental housing units but requested a report on education and transportation costs. These reports have now been submitted to the Metropolitan Corporation. Rental housing construction is not likely to take place for some years.

g. Jane and Keele, North York: 1,500 units (estimate) As reported previously, the trunk sewers will be available by 1962. An application has been made by York University to have these lands set aside for the use of the university. No decision has been reached on this application. Although the Metropolitan Council had requested the Federal-Provincial Partnership to undertake preliminary investigation of rental housing on these lands, there has been no indication yet from the senior governments that they will approve a low rental housing project or land assembly project on this

site. In the event that the York University application is approved, the Interim Housing Committee feels that it would still be possible to reserve a small part of the land for public housing purposes in such a way as to not conflict with the plans of York University.

h. Malvern, Scarborough: 2,500-3,000 units (estimate)
Preliminary planning for this property is not yet complete. Trunk sewers will not be available until 1963, according to the present Metropolitan capital works programme.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC HOUSING AND MUNICIPALLY SPONSORED
 LOW-RENT HOUSING IN METROPOLITAN TORONTO AS AT
 April 30th, 1961

1. Public Housing

(1) Existing: No. of Units

Lawrence Heights, North York	-	1,043
South Regent Park, Toronto	-	732
Regent Park North, Toronto (City of Toronto Housing Authority)	-	1,397

		3,172

(2) Under Construction:

Lawrence Heights Extension, North York	-	38

(3) Approved and Under Tender Call:

Scarlett Road, Etobicoke	-	155

(4) Preliminary Federal-Provincial Approval:

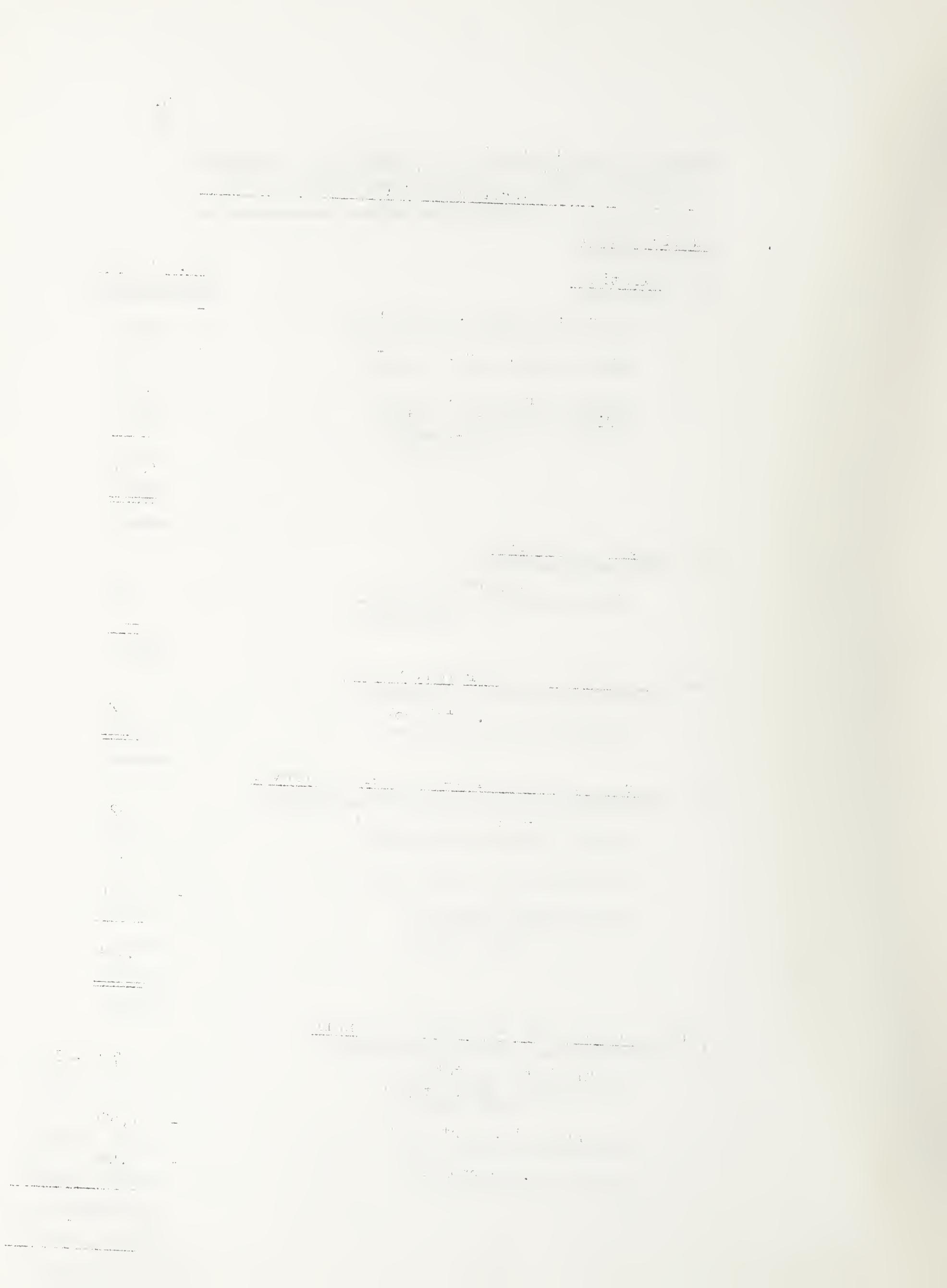
Warden Avenue, Scarborough	-	324
O'Connor Drive, North York	-	300
Thistletown, Etobicoke (1st. Stage)	-	500

		1,124

(5) Proposed by Metropolitan Council:

Thistletown, Etobicoke (2nd. Stage)	-	700 - 1,000
Jane-Keele, North York	-	1,500 - 2,000
Malvern, Scarborough	-	2,500 - 3,000

		4,700 - 5,500



2. Other Municipally Sponsored Low Rent Housing (Under Section 16 of the National Housing Act - Limited Dividend)

(a) <u>Elderly Persons' Housing</u>	<u>No. of Units</u>
(1) <u>Existing:</u>	
Beech Hall, York Township (Sponsored by York Township)	- 128
Westacres, Etobicoke	- 224
North Acres, North York	- 128
Scarborough Acres, Scarkorough	- 16
May Robinson House, Toronto	- 405
Woodbine Acres, Toronto	- 42
Brimley Acres, Scarborough	- 201
Riverdale Acres, Toronto	- 25

	1,169

(2) <u>Under Construction:</u>	
Haldon Avenue, East York	- 201

(3) <u>Tenders to be Called Shortly:</u>	
King High Avenue, North York	- 31
Scarlett Road, Etobicoke	- 46

	77

(4) <u>Preliminary Approval by Metropolitan Council:</u>	
O'Connor Drive, North York	- 160
Warden Avenue, Scarborough	- 174
Jane and Wilson, North York	- 128

	462

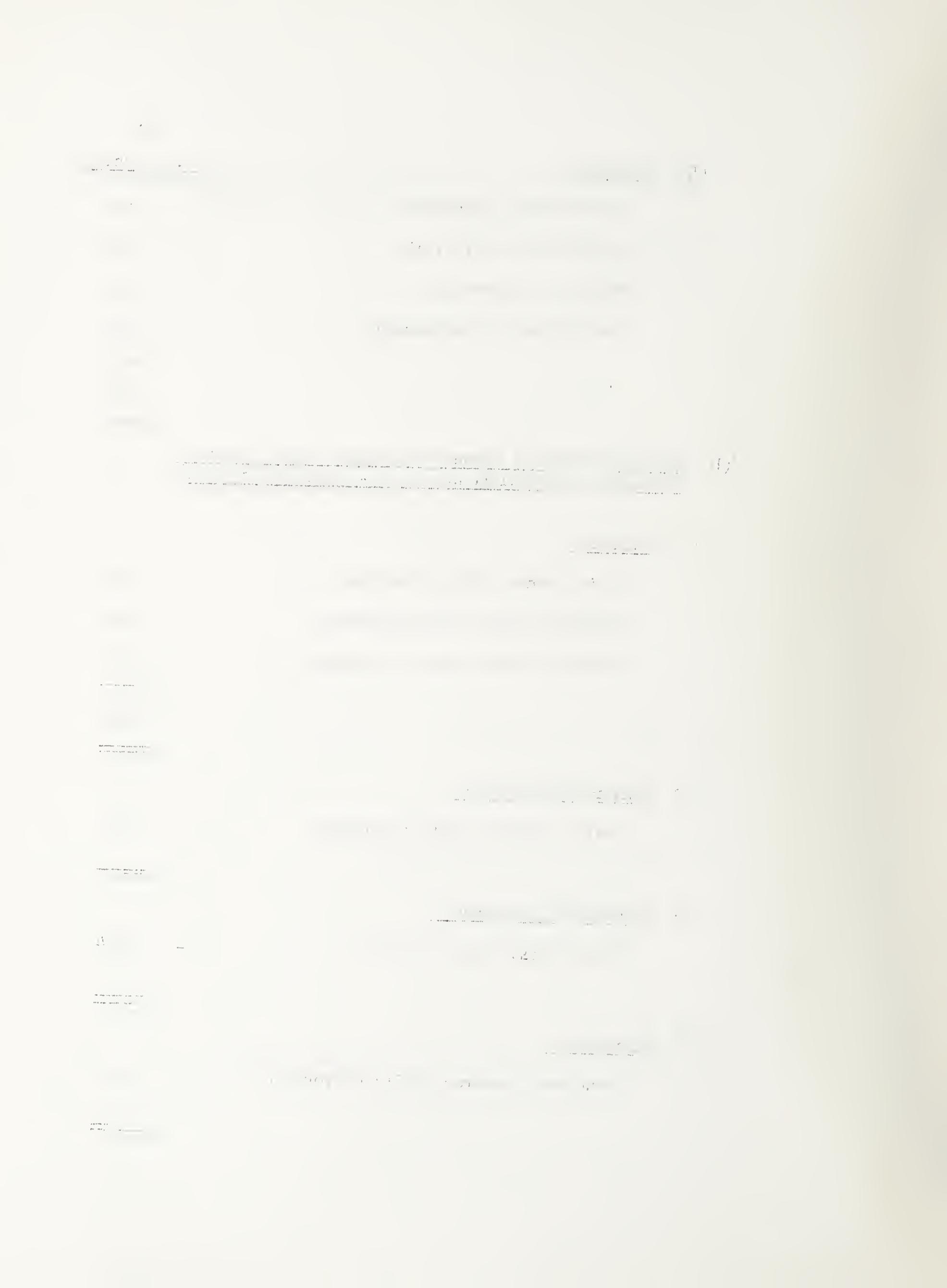
(5) <u>Proposed:</u>		<u>No. of Units</u>
Thistletown, Etobicoke	-	160
Jane-Keele, North York	-	174
Malvern, Scarborough	-	320
Kennedy Road, Scarborough	-	200

		854
		=====

(b) Other Municipally Sponsored Housing (Under Section 16 of the National Housing Act - Limited Dividend)

(1) <u>Existing:</u>		
Phin Avenue, City of Toronto	-	34
Brockton Park, City of Toronto	-	106
Greenwood Park, City of Toronto	-	81

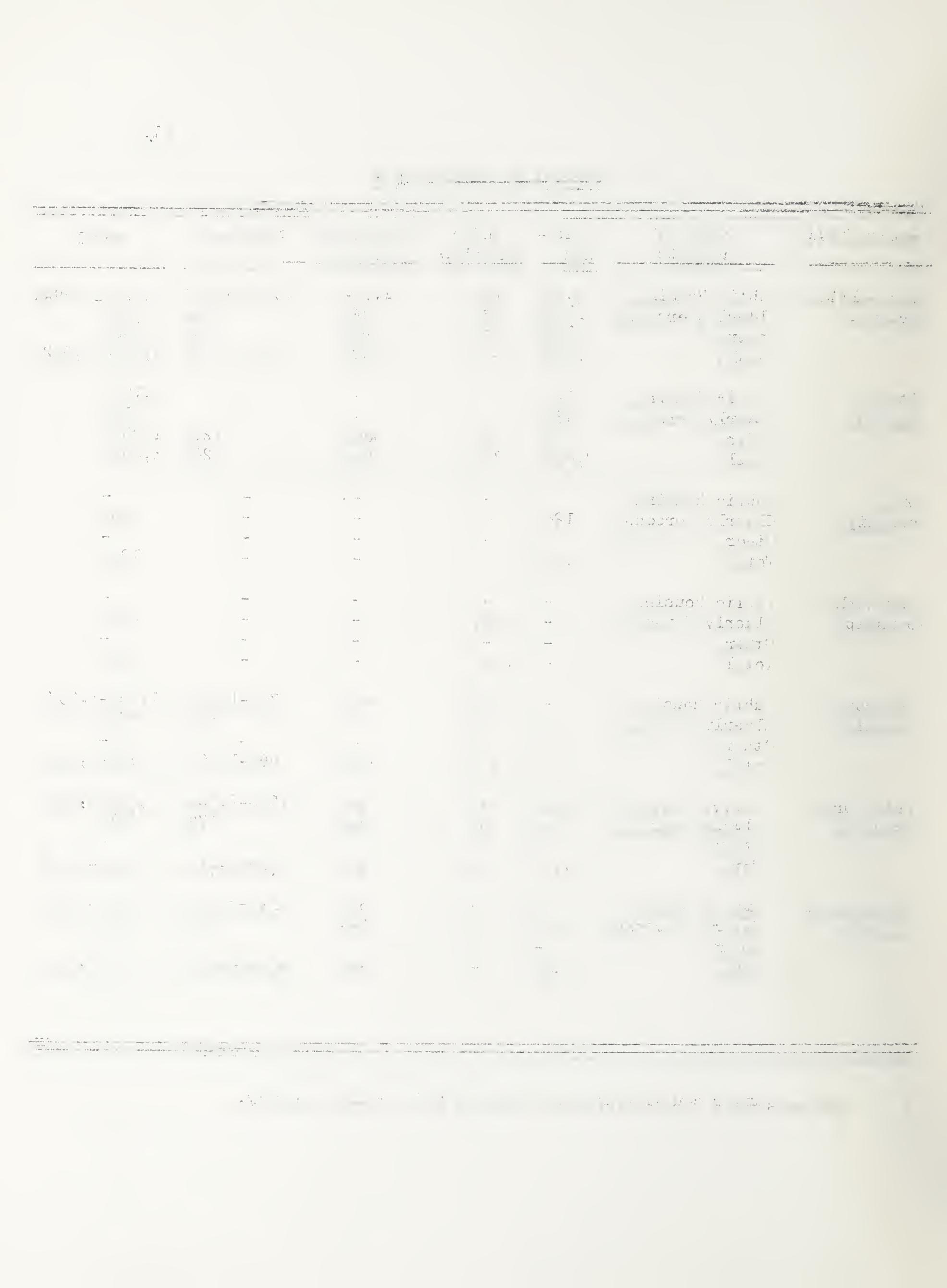
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(2) <u>Under Construction:</u>		
Seaton Street, City of Toronto	-	25
		=====
(3) <u>Preliminary Approval:</u>		
Moss Park, City of Toronto	-	884
		=====
(4) <u>Proposed:</u>		
Queen and Eastern, City of Toronto	-	120
		=====



SUMMARY BY MUNICIPALITY

Municipality	Type of Project	Exist-ing	Under Const'n.*	Preliminary Approval	Proposed	Total
Metropolitan Toronto	Public Housing	3,172	193	1,124	4,700-6,000	9,189-10,489
	Elderly Persons	1,169	278	462	854	2,763
	Other	221	25	884	120	1,250
	Total	4,562	496	2,470	5,674-6,974	13,202-19,502
City of Toronto	Public Housing	2,129	-	-	-	2,129
	Elderly Persons	472	-	-	-	472
	Other	221	25	884	120	1,250
	Total	2,822	25	884	120	3,851
York Township	Public Housing	-	-	-	-	-
	Elderly Persons	128	-	-	-	128
	Other	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	128	-	-	-	128
East York Township	Public Housing	-	-	-	-	-
	Elderly Persons	-	201	-	-	201
	Other	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	201	-	-	201
Etobicoke Township	Public Housing	-	155	500	700-1,000	1,355-1,650
	Elderly Persons	224	46	-	160	430
	Other	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	224	201	500	860-1,160	1,785-2,085
North York Township	Public Housing	1,043	38	300	1,500-2,000	2,881-3,381
	Elderly Persons	128	31	288	174	621
	Other	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	1,171	69	588	1,674-2,174	3,502-4,002
Scarborough Township	Public Housing	-	-	324	2,500-3,000	2,824-3,324
	Elderly Persons	217	-	174	520	911
	Other	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	217	-	493	3,020-3,520	3,735-4,235

* Includes under construction and tenders to be called shortly.



2. REPORTS ON EDUCATION COSTS, TRANSIT COSTS AND HEALTH,
WELFARE AND RECREATION COSTS

(a) Education Costs

The Interim Housing Committee on April 17th, 1961, submitted to the Welfare and Housing Committee, a report on local education costs arising from low rent housing projects. This was considered by the Welfare and Housing Committee on May 17th, 1961, and the Committee adopted the following recommendations:

1. that the Metropolitan Council, agree, in principle, to the provision of Metropolitan assistance to local municipalities to cover added school costs generated by future low-rent housing projects, including the O'Connor Drive, Scarlett Road and Warden Avenue projects, substantially on the basis of the recurring annual grant formula outlined in the foregoing report;
2. that subject to the Metropolitan Council adopting recommendation (1) above, the Interim Housing Committee be requested to prepare a further report jointly with the Metropolitan Commissioner of Finance, the Metropolitan Solicitor and the Executive Secretary, Metropolitan School Board, on the specific procedures to be adopted for calculating and administering the Metropolitan grants, and any amending legislation that may be required in this connection; and

3. that a further study of this matter be made in so far as it relates to existing public housing projects.

This report was referred back to the Executive Committee by Council at its meeting on May 26th, 1961. At the same time the officials concerned were directed to prepare the further report noted in (2) above for consideration by the Executive Committee at its meeting to be held on June 20th, 1961.

(b) Transit Costs

Because of the multiple-fare system which is in effect in the Metropolitan Area, it is clear that many tenants in suburban housing projects incur transportation costs which are higher than would be the case if all of the public housing units were to be located within the Zone 1 area.

While it is difficult to determine the amount of inter-zone travelling by public housing tenants which is taking place or can be expected in the future, it is instructive to note the location of the proposed and potential public housing projects.

Four of the projects which have already received some form of preliminary approval by the senior governments - Scarlett Road, Warden Avenue, O'Connor Drive and Lawrence Heights Extension - are within the Zone 2 area. The proposed project at Stableford

Farm is in the Zone 4 area, and it is likely that the projects at Thistletown and Jane-Keele would be in either Zone 3 or Zone 4 if transit services were provided in accordance with the present zone structure. Malvern would probably fall into the Zone 4 area at best.

This indicates that as long as employment opportunities for tenants in public housing projects are to be found largely in the central urban area relatively heavy transportation expenses may be anticipated.

It is possible that in the long run, as the intermediate and outer areas become more intensely urbanized and provide more job opportunities, this situation will become less acute.

It is not considered however that the question of added transportation costs can properly be dealt with by the Metropolitan Council in any reasonable manner. From one standpoint, the problem can be viewed simply as being part of the larger Metropolitan wide problem of the relation between residential location and transportation costs and it can perhaps be assumed that this larger problem will in time either be rectified by administrative procedures or will correct itself through the normal process of urban growth. From another standpoint, the problem can be seen as part of the general question of the relationship between family income

and household expenses, and could thus be approached from the point of view of rental levels in public housing projects. In either case, however, there appears to be little that the Metropolitan Corporation as such could undertake with respect to easing the problem of transportation expenses in public housing projects.

This problem should be dealt with either by the Housing Authority in the establishment of rental levels or as part of any overall consideration of the multiple-fare question in the Metropolitan Area.

(c) Health, Welfare and Recreation Costs

During 1960, the staffs of the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority, the Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board and the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto jointly made a study of the need for health, welfare and recreation services in the two public housing projects under the supervision of the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority, namely - South Regent Park and Lawrence Heights. The study aims as agreed to were as follows:

1. To determine the current community service needs of the tenants of the projects.
2. To determine the community services currently being used by the tenants of each of the projects, the portion of their needs being met by these services, and the portion left unmet.

3. To determine the share these services to project tenants represent out of all services being provided in the community.
4. To determine whether or not there are significant differences in these matters between the suburban Lawrence Heights and the central urban South Regent Park project.

While the limitations of the study do not permit the drawing of any comprehensive or final conclusions, the following very tentative findings are suggested by the study data:

- (1) That the community service needs arising from the public housing projects are only moderately heavy.
- (2) That the majority of these needs are being met by existing service facilities.
- (3) That, in general, the projects are not placing an undue burden on the existing facilities.
- (4) That there is no significant difference in the level of service available to the suburban and city projects.

Thus the study would seem to indicate that although a public housing project does tend to concentrate a considerable number of low income families into a relatively small geographic area, this does not tend to result in any undue burden on existing community

service facilities.* Indeed it seems likely that since the project management is able to bring the needs of project tenants to the attention of the responsible social agencies at an early stage, the social services provided may prevent more serious deterioration of the families, with the result that in the long term the project tenants may actually cost the community services less than other low-income families living in other areas.

There is no indication that a public housing project creates any community service needs which did not exist before, although by relocating families from other parts of the Metropolitan Area into the project the pre-existing needs may be shifted from one area municipality to another. In this regard, it should be noted that in the matter of public assistance, the municipality in which a project is located is not financially responsible until after twelve months of residence, and then 80 percent of the assistance payments are reimbursed by the Province. It should also be noted that this relocation of families into public housing projects represents

* However, a study conducted by the Social Planning Council in 1958 has pointed out the need for nursery school and play facilities for pre-school children in Regent Park South because of the heavy concentration of families in high rise apartments in a relatively small area.

only a small portion of the continual relocation of families from one area municipality to another. Many of these other families relocating in private housing also have low-incomes and there are indications that these population shifts in private housing are bringing about a much more normal urban income distribution in those suburbs which have previously had an abnormally small percentage of low-income residents. As time goes on therefore, the low-income tenants of public housing projects in these suburbs will probably represent an ever decreasing portion of the total suburban low-income residents. From the above discussion it is clear that there appears to be no justification at the present time for considering any special Metropolitan assistance to local municipalities regarding health, welfare and recreation services provided to public housing tenants; the local municipalities should expect to bear any necessary increase in the costs of these services as a normal part of their urban growth.

The Committee on Housing of the Social Planning Council after considering this study of the health, welfare and recreation needs of public housing tenants, has decided to make the following recommendations to the Board of the Social Planning Council:

- (1) A similar survey be conducted two years hence for purposes of comparison of the needs for community services.
- (2) The Committee on Housing should give consideration to the possibility of a comparative study of the tenants of public housing and other areas containing a large number of low-income families.
- (3) The Social Planning Council, through the Committee on Housing, and the Area Councils should take an active role in interpreting the need for public housing to the community especially in the suburban areas where many of the projects of the future may be erected. The Social Planning Council should work closely with other community bodies, e.g., Ratepayers Associations, churches, etc. in those areas where public housing is planned in order to alleviate fears and misunderstandings.
- (4) Social agencies should be involved as early as possible in the planning of public housing projects in order that they may have the opportunity to offer their services and advice and to make their own plans for the provision of services to such projects. The Committee on Housing should be directed to bring this proposal to the attention of the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority and the Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board.

3. REPORTS ON RECOMMENDATIONS ACCEPTED BY THE MUNICIPALITY OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO CONTAINED IN THE REPORT OF 18th MAY 1960.

a) Acquisition of Housing Land

In the 1960 report the Interim Housing Committee recommended that the Metropolitan Corporation continue to acquire suitable public housing sites as specific circumstances dictated. Due to the slow rate at which existing lands are being used, no new lands have been acquired, or are recommended to be acquired by the Metropolitan Corporation. Until the public housing program is accelerated considerably by all levels of government, it would be unwise for the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto to acquire any more land on its own account for purposes of public housing.

b) Proposed Land Exchange

In the 1960 report a specific recommendation was made, which was adopted by Metropolitan Corporation, requesting that the Federal-Provincial Partnership be asked to study the possibility of exchanging some of their land assembly property for sites of equivalent market value in scattered smaller holdings.

It was recommended that suitable sites in other sections of the Metropolitan Toronto area, or its immediate fringes, might be acquired under this arrangement which would be suitable for the development of future public housing projects. Neither

the Province of Ontario, nor the Federal Government, has commented on this recommendation by Council.

c) Sites for Elderly Persons' Housing

It was recommended that Metropolitan Corporation continue its efforts to provide sites for elderly persons' housing. There are sites at the following locations:

Thistletown, Etobicoke - * 160 suites

Jane-Keele, North York - * 174 suites

Malvern, Scarborough - * 320 suites

Kennedy Road, Scarborough - * 200 suites

* preliminary estimates

d) Proposed Consolidation of the Two Authorities

In the 1960 report it was recommended to and accepted by the Metropolitan Council that a unified housing and development policy and programme for the Metropolitan area be established. The Executive Committee of the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto requested a meeting with the Board of Control of the City of Toronto to discuss some form of organizational consolidation between the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority and the City of Toronto Housing Authority, including its Central Housing Registry and relocation facilities. This meeting did not take place but the issue was referred to the Special Committee of Council dealing with the larger amalgamation issue.

e) Moss Park Project

The 1960 report recommended that the Metropolitan Corporation and the City of Toronto consider a satisfactory agreement as to the financial aspects of participation in the Moss Park project. It was recommended that the Federal-Provincial Partnership be requested to approve a subsidized low rental project on this land. The Council of the City of Toronto on May 8th, 1961, directed the City of Toronto Limited Dividend Company to make formal application to Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation with respect to a limited dividend project. As set out in the redevelopment plans of the City of Toronto the proposal is that the project should be carried out by the City of Toronto Limited Dividend Company and shall consist of the following number, type and distribution of units:-

<u>Type</u>		<u>Number</u>
Bachelor	18%	169
1-Bedroom	52%	452
2-Bedroom	24%	208
3-Bedroom	4%	37
4-Bedroom	2%	18
Total		884
Total Population		1,813
Number of Children		407

f) Alexandra Park Project

Contained in the 1960 report was a recommendation that the City of Toronto be requested to consider

again, as part of a unified housing and redevelopment programme, the establishment of a pilot urban renewal scheme in the Alexandra Park area to encompass all of the techniques available for renewal purposes. Also contained in the report was a recommendation by the Interim Housing Committee to acquire, or lease existing housing for rehabilitation purposes. The National Housing Act as amended last year permits acquisition of existing housing in urban renewal areas only. The Committee is of the opinion that this amendment to the National Housing Act might well have included existing housing units in surrounding areas in order to facilitate relocation. But the amendment to the National Housing Act to allow the acquisition of existing real estate in urban renewal areas could be of major importance in the redevelopment of Alexandra Park.

On March 7th, 1961, the Ontario Minister of Municipal Affairs advised that the Province is prepared to give approval in principle to contribute 25% of the cost of acquiring and clearing the land in an area eventually to be designated by the City under Section 20 of the Planning Act, providing that certain conditions were met. As a result of the conditions imposed, it is understood that an Advisory Committee composed of City, Federal and Provincial officials, will review the present proposal and specifically:

- 1) Attempt to identify a somewhat larger and more appropriate area.
- 2) Adjust the boundaries so that less money is spent in removing commercial establishments, and more on clearing out poor residential uses.
- 3) Select houses which may be used for public housing purposes under the new Provincial and Federal public housing legislation.
- 4) Develop a programme of area improvement, and draft an overall renewal plan including clearance, improvement, by-law enforcement, new construction and private participation.
- 5) Recommend such a plan and proposal to the respective levels of Government.

It would appear that Alexandra Park is a suitable area to house large families in the low income group at the rental rates required to accommodate this segment of the community. It is felt that this could only be achieved under Section 36 of the National Housing Act.

g) Revision of Procedures in Producing Public Housing

Detailed recommendations were made to the Federal and Provincial Government with a view to streamlining the methods of producing public housing real estate. The suggestions were made in the interest of efficiency and lower end-construction costs. Although the two Governments concerned have

acknowledged receipt of the report, they have not commented on any of the specific recommendations made by the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto in connection with this matter.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS - 1961

- (a) that the recommendations made in the 1960 report of the Interim Housing Committee concerning possible changes in Federal-Provincial policies and procedures intended to speed public housing be reaffirmed.
- (b) that the Metropolitan Council make every effort to devise and institute a consolidated public housing and urban renewal program for the Metropolitan area.
- (c) that the Committee's report on educational costs be adopted.
- (d) that no action be taken by the Metropolitan Council concerning transportation costs related to public housing projects.
- (e) that no special Metropolitan assistance be provided to local municipalities regarding public health and welfare services provided to public housing tenants.
- (f) that no additional lands be purchased at this time by the Metropolitan Corporation for public housing purposes other than for elderly persons' housing.

